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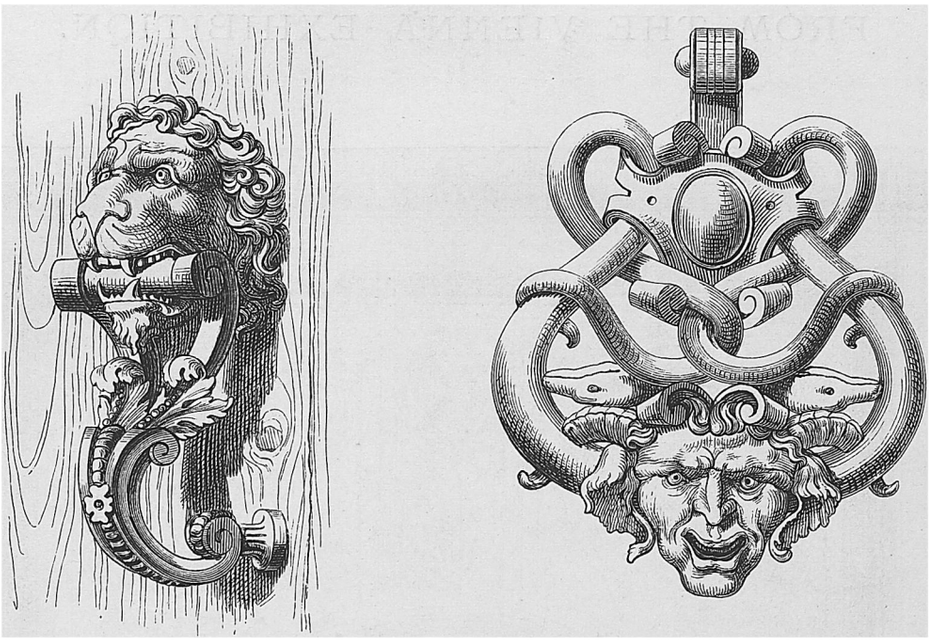

Nos. 20 and 21. From Venice. Knockers, drawn by Mr. Thomas Schæffler, Munich.

VARIOUS.

SOME USES OF BLACK, WHITE, AND GOLD.

Black, white, and gold are neutral as regards colour. This is the case although many would suppose that gold was a yellow. Gold will act as a yellow, but it is generally employed as a neutral in decorative work, and it is more of a neutral than a yellow, for both red and blue exist largely in it. The pictorial artist frames his picture with gold because it, being a neutral, does not interfere with the tints of his work. It has the further advantage of being rich and costly in appearance, and thus of giving an impression of worth where it exists.

Black, white, and gold, being neutral, may be advantageously employed to separate colours where separation is necessary or desirable.

Yellow and purple harmonize, but yellow is a light colour and purple is dark. These colours not only harmonize, but also contrast as to depth, the one being light and the other dark. The limit of each colour, wherever these are used in juxtaposition, is therefore obvious.

It is not so with red and green, for these harmonize when of the same depth. This being the case, and red being a glowing colour, if a red object is placed on a green ground, or a green object on a red ground, the "figure" and ground will appear to "swim" together, and will produce a dazzling effect. Colour must assist form, and not confuse it. It will do this in the instance just named if the figure is outlined with black, white, or gold, and there will be no loss of harmony. But experience has shown that this effect can also be averted by outlining the figure with a ligther tint of its own colour. Thus, if the figure is red and the ground green, an outline of ligther red (pink) may be employed.

A blue figure on a red ground (as ultramarine on carmine), or a red figure on a blue ground, will also produce this swimming and unsatisfactory effect, but this is again obviated by an outline of black, white, or gold.

Employing the outline thus must not be regarded as a means of merely rendering what was actually unpleasant endurable, for it does much more — it affords one of the richest means of effect. A carmine ground well covered with bold green ornament having a gold outline is, if well managed, truly gorgeous; and were the figure blue on the red ground, the lavish use of gold would render the employment of yellow unnecessary, as the yellow formed in the eye and cast upon the gold would satisfy all requirements.

We have already fully explained the curious fact that the eye will create any colour of which there is a deficiency. This it will do, but the colour so created is of little use to the composition unless white or gold is present; if, however, there be white or gold in the composition, the colour which is absent, or is insufficiently represented, will be formed in the eye and cast upon these neutrals, and the white or the gold, as the case may be, will assume the tint of the deficient or absent colour.

While this occurs (and sometimes it occurs to a marked degree, as can be shown by experiment), it must not be supposed that a composition in which any element is wanting is as perfect as one which reveals no want. It is far otherwise; only Nature here comes to our assistance, and is content to help herself rather than endure our shortcomings; but in the one case we give Nature the labour of completing the harmony; in the other, all being prepared, we receive a sense of satisfaction and repose.

Let a blue spot be placed on a black silk necktie, and however black the silk, it will yet appear rusty. This is a fact; but we sometimes desire to employ blue on black, and wish the black to look black, and not an orange-black. How can we do this? Obviously by substituting for the black a very dark blue, as indigo. The bright blue spot induces orange (the complement of blue) in the eye. This orange, when cast upon black, causes the latter to look "rusty"; but if we place in the black an amount of blue sufficient to neutralize the orange cast upon it, the effect will be that of a jet-black. *The Furniture Gazette.*